

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

This amendment responds to the office action dated August 23, 2005.

The Examiner has allowed claims 43-46 and indicated that claims 18, 19, 38, 39, and 42 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-8, 12-17, 20-28, 31-33, 35-37, and 40-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Moricca et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,080,517 (hereinafter Moricca) and Fulford et al., U.S. Patent App. No. 2003/0091174 (hereinafter Fulford). The Examiner rejected claims 9-10 and 29-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Moricca, Fulford, and Nelson, U.S. Patent No. 6,755,381.

Moricca discloses a telephone indicator that monitors flashing lights on a telephone having up to four connected telephone lines, each line having an associated light signal indicating the status of its associated line. On the assumption that a constant light indicates a line in use, no light indicates a line not in use, a light flashing at once per second indicates a line ringing, and a light flashing twice per second indicates a line on hold, Moricca's telephone system is capable of detecting these four light patterns and outputting an audio signal unique to the status of each line so that a hearing impaired person can operate the phone. The Examiner concedes that the system of Moricca is not detachably connected to the telephone, but argues that this feature is obvious.

The system of Moricca is not programmable by a user. The Examiner argues, however, that Moricca may be combined with Fulford, which discloses programmable ring tones to associate with individual phones throughout a home. The Examiner's asserted combination is improper. Fulford discloses the desirability of placing a phone call from one phone in a home to another in the same home, while retaining the functionality of calling outside the home. To this end, Fulford discloses a first embodiment in which each phone may be connected to a Private Branch Exchange (PBX) device to route internal phone calls. Thus, when each phone is

connected to a PBX, a user at one phone may dial a number associated uniquely with another phone in the home, and only that phone will ring. An outside line is accessed through a unique number, such as the number "9". In this embodiment, Fulford discloses no uses for programmable ring tones.

In an alternate embodiment, Fulford discloses that each phone in the home may be connected to a *single, central* PBX. In this embodiment, the PBX is incapable of singling out any particular phone in the household to cause to ring, hence dialing a number unique to one phone in the home will cause the PBX to send a ring tone uniquely associated with the dialed number to each phone. A person may then identify which phone is being requested for a pick up by the ring tone. Presumably, this is accomplished by storing plural ring tones at respective memory locations in each phone, and associating at the PBX individual phone unit numbers with ring tone signals to be sent to activate the desired ring tone resident at the phones. Thus, in the only embodiment disclosed by Fulford that uses programmable ring tones the programming is done, as it must be, at the PBX, and *not at the phone*. Thus, Fulford does not provide any motive to modify Moricca's *phone unit* to include a "user-programmable" processor that is operatively connected to "a receptor member having one or more light receiving members capable of generating a respective electrical signal in response to light incident on said light-receiving member" as claimed in independent claims 1 and 41.

Furthermore, the Examiner's attempted combination fails for additional reasons. First, Moricca discloses a telephone unit having multiple lines into the phone, which can be used by a blind person by an interface that translates blinking lights for each line on the phone into audio signals of unique frequencies. The in-home system of Fulford is not disclosed to be enabled with the type of multiple-line phone to which Moricca is solely directed. In other words, Fulford does not indicate that the PBX units which are to be attached to a phone can either distinguish between different lines running to a single phone, route a call to one line of a multi-line phone, or assign a unique ring tone to multiple lines running to a single phone. Therefore, the Examiner has

not shown that the asserted combination will provide the functionality intended by Fulford.

More fundamentally, using the system of Fulford would interfere with a blind person's use of Moricca's phone system. The user of Moricca's phone associates sound from an audio tone generator with the status individual lines connected to the phone. Thus, although Moricca's phone includes plural audio signals, those audio signals are used to distinguish between multiple phone lines connected to the unit, and whether those lines are on hold or are actively ringing. Reprogramming the phone to associate the various audio signals to indicate which phone another person in the home wants to converse over, would render the phone of Moricca unfit for its intended use. (The Applicant notes that no disclosure in either Moricca or Fulford enables a single phone unit to audibly indicate *both* whether the particular phone, among other household phones, is specifically targeted, and if so, which of multiple phone lines on that particular phone is ringing, and its status).

In any event, applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 41 to include the limitation of "said processor being user-programmable to associate said event with said light signal." Even were the phone unit of Moricca modified to be programmable to uniquely associate a ring tone with that unit, so as to audibly distinguish that unit among multiple units in the home, such programming would not associate an event with a light signal. Therefore, each of independent claims 1-20 and 41-42 are each patentably distinguished over the prior art.

Independent claim 21 has been amended to recite the limitations of "each said receptor member detachably connectable, independently of other said plural receptor members, to a light-emitting member that indicates the existence of an event by emitting a light signal associated with said event" and "a processor selectively, operatively connectable to more than one said receptor member so as to simultaneously receive said respective electrical signals from connected said receptor members." The Examiner appears to be arguing that each photoconductor on Moricca's telephone unit is a "receptor member." As amended, independent claim 21 is

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distinguishable over the cited prior art because no cited reference discloses a plurality of receptor members, each "independently, detachably connectable" to a light emitting member and a processor "operatively connectable to more than one receptor member."

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-33 and 35-46,

Respectfully submitted,



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